

Andrew Jackson to John Coffee, December 29, 1813, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

TO JOHN COFFEE.

Fort Strother, December 29, "10 oclock at night," 1813.

I had the pleasure of receiving by last nights express yours of the 27th. instant and thank you for pushing on the express, but it really brought nothing but lengthy milk and cider recommendations of retro-grading by the governors assertions of good wishes to the cause I am engaged in, and regret of want of power to aid me by men untill instructed by the Secratary of war. I have give him a good natured tickler by Lt Parish. By the express that goes on with this, I give him a *gulger* , that will make him look and see his own situation and that of the consequences of a failure or delay of the campaign. I have pointed out his duty and his power in strong language not to be mistaken. I have give him the orders of the government to me, their expectations of the force in the field from Tennessee, their disappointment in not finding it in the field when a Spanish force is before pensacola, and have asked him what answer he can make to the goverment in not having 1500 in the field under the requisition of the secratary of war from the Eastern section of the state, under his order, and why he has not called on his officer, for an answer why he has not brought them into the field, and lastly painted in high colours, the pledge we have made of protection to the friendly indians their situation if I retrograde—with a British force at Pensacola, the Choctaws wavering, my orders to advance, and the situation of the Georgia army in case I retreat, and wind up with shewing his responsibility with and his certain damnation if the campaign fails, and him sitting with his arms folded and waiting for

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orders from the secretary of war. I think it will arouse him from his lethargy and make him act.

I hope my answer to the address of the mounted gunmen and cavalry reached you before they separated and that it was read to them. I also hope you have had it published in the Huntsville gazette, and then send it on to Nashville for publication. Let the world see how Colo Alcorn will look in the future with his sacred pledge signed with his own hand, and exciting and encouraging desertion and mutiny. If they go let them go, and as Capt David Smith writes to me "they will be met with the curses of their country both in front and rear."

I wrote you the other day, by express and referred you to Colo Carrolls letter for further information. I hope he has made my powers known to those brave men that has come on with him. A soldier never ought to be deceived he never ought to do service for which he will not be paid. Of their pay I have no doubt, but as their term of service does not bring them within any law or order, the power of directing payment rests not with me and I do not wish them to be deceived. In the name of God what is the contractors quarter masters, and adjutant Antony about. Where is the pack horses, and waggons I sent the quarter master to purchase and send on with meal. We have not one pound of bread stuff nor have we had for two days.

Can it be possible that the contractors has employed the publick horses to carry there meal from the mills to Fort Deposit. I hope not. You will please see to this. They are bound to furnish the transportation to the south bank of the Tennessee the U.S. afterwards. I am anxious to make a movement before the Holston Regt leaves me, their time is up on the 14 of January. I have sent Baxter up to Fort Armstrong and Rosses, with instructions to purchase supplies at any price and to have them pushed forward to us. He will do his duty and I feel confident will discover the combination that has starved us, founded on the intention of destroying our operations. All things will be right I hope shortly as soon as my letters get on to the war office. Should any supplies come down the river I will advise you, and as soon as breadstuff and the portage can be procured with you, to justify a

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movement and your force added to the force here, is 2000, move up without further orders. should the supplies not come in a few days we will loose the Holston troops which is Eight hundred strong, few of them will march forward without coercion, and when they have but a few days to serve coercion would be improper. In a few days we could reach the hickory ground and one blow will finish the war on cosee and Tallaposa. I learn that genl adams is somewhere on the head of Tallaposa, but what he has done as yet I have not heard.

accept of my congratulations on your returning health. I hope you will be able to command through the campaign. Your name is verry highly spoken off in the Presidents message. This will be a killing stroke to your envious enemies and is as highly gratifying to me. I wish if I can to make a bold stroke, and form a Junction with the Georgia Troops, and conjointly form a Junction with Claibourne, scouring the country on both banks of the allabama. I have a party of two hundred and fifty out now on the cahaba [and] hope they may bring me some hair.

with sentiments of Esteem I am yours respectfully

P. S. I wish this express pushed on to Nashville.